

# Hill 'n Vale

Newsletter of the Tomales and Two Rock Valley Presbyterian Churches

September / October 2018

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## **PASTORAL PONDERINGS**

Dear Friends in Two Rock and Tomales,

As summer comes to a close, so does our summer sermon series on "The Top Ten". I continue to be thankful to those of you who shared with me your "top five" or "top ten", your favorite Bible passages, your go-to texts when you are looking for hope, comfort, and encouragement in Scripture.

When I sorted different people's favorite passages into ten groups for preaching, I began to notice certain themes that are important to you. Some passages you chose speak of your earnest desire **to be in relationship with our Lord** and to seek out God's presence and kindness. Other passages lifted up **your desire to live rightly** before God, to do what is right and good, to the glory of God and the well-being of God's people. Yet other Biblical texts focus on the **community in Christ**: how we might live together within the church, so that we show forth the mercy and justice of our Lord, and how we might relate to the wider society.

I noticed also **what kinds of passages are not part of your "Top Ten"**: no one wanted me to preach about hell, or about a coming rapture, or about who gets to heaven. It seems that all of us trust in the goodness and

faithfulness of our Lord, and that we believe that the God who gives us life and new life in Christ is always with us and for us.

As the final Sunday for our "Top Ten" sermon series approaches, the passages before me are John 15:1-17 and 1 John 4:7-12. The Gospel text concerns **Jesus' saying about the wine and the branches** and his commandment that **the disciples love one another**; the Epistle text contains a similar exhortation to show forth God's love and kindness by our love for one another.

Jesus' parable of the wine and the branches holds some significance for me personally: it was a passage well-loved by the Reverend Bill Fredrickson, my pastor when I was a member at San Geronimo Presbyterian Church. I remember his interpretation of this text: we need the love of Christ and the support of the Christian community more when there are storms in our lives, just like a grape vine needs to be firmly attached to support wires to withstand heavy winds. And we need the mercy of God and the encouragement of our church more as we grow in life and as we grow older, just like a grape vine needs more support when it grows in size and gets heavier with age.

As we come back from vacation and back to school, may we also come back to church joyously to worship God! For all of us need our Lord's grace and strength, all of us need our congregation's care and love,

not only during life's storms but also as we grow in years, wisdom, and wonder.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Cornelia

## **THANK YOU'S**

After staying for 7 ½ years, the renters of the **Two Rock Church Manse** moved out on June 10. The very next day, elder Kathy Stroke had lined up the first of many workers who would come over the next two months to repair, improve or clean things at 7 Tomales Road in Two Rock, which is the street address for the manse.



With the strong support of session, Kathy and Cliff Stroke took the lead in the manse renovation, acting as general contractors and also doing a lot of hands-on repairing and cleaning. Session hired a pest control service; had the heating ducts redone; the entire ceiling fully insulated; the walls in the whole house freshly painted; the floors in the bedrooms and hallway redone with long-lasting linoleum planks; three doors replaced; fans installed in the bathrooms and over the kitchen stove; windows washed; and the septic tank inspected. Cliff Stroke installed new faucets in the

bathrooms and kitchen and hung new mirrors and light fixtures; he changed out the door hardware, so that all deadbolts are keyed alike; and he insulated and drywalled some walls in the garage.

In addition, Kathy and Cliff spent a lot of time in the evenings and on weekends cleaning the kitchen and bathrooms, washing and polishing woodwork, and soaking and scrubbing all window coverings. They worked long and hard, and it was a labor of love.

To tackle things outside the manse, session hired a local service to prune bushes and trees, remove overgrown shrubs, and haul away debris. Then Ben Visser and Peter Koroitama, under the direction of elder Paul Lewis, raked, straightened walkways, moved pavers, weed-wacked, etc. Final landscaping will be done after we have had some rain.

**A huge thank-you to our Two Rock session: Kathy Stroke, Lonnie Wernstrum, Paul Lewis, and Gail Turcotte.** Thank you all for working together and supporting one another in tackling this big project! Thank you to **Cliff Stroke**, master electrician and master of renovations! Many thanks also to treasurer Mel Todt who kept track of expenses and paid bills; and thank you to the congregation for your support and prayers.

## ***JOYS TO SHARE***

Congratulations to Tomales member **John Mitchell** who turned 86 on June 22.

John was born at the old Petaluma General Hospital in 1932, the second of Viola and Alex Mitchell's three children. John grew up on the Mitchell family ranch in Tomales, went to the

town's elementary and high schools, and was a member of the 1950 graduating class. He attended UC Davis for one year but then returned home to work on the family ranch. From 1955 to 1957, John served in the US Army and was stationed in Georgia and Arizona. At the end of his enlistment, he took the long way home to California, visiting Army buddies in New York and various other states along the way. He was back in Tomales by the time he had turned 25.

Soon John joined a young people's social group, and it was there that he met Joan Colledge, a teacher at McNear School in Petaluma. Joan was the love of John's life, and the couple was married at Joan's home in Napa in June 1958. After that, John and Joan moved to the family ranch in Tomales.

When Liz and John "Mitch" were born, Joan stayed home with the two children for about eight years. In 1967, she became a substitute teacher at Tomales Elementary School, and a full-time teacher in 1968. John continued to work on the Mitchell ranch until 1969. Then he worked as a milker for neighboring ranchers, and from 1974 on milked full-time for Al Poncia. John retired from milking in the mid-1980's and began driving cars for Hertz, a job that he loved and held for over 25 years, until 2013.

The illness of John's beloved wife Joan and her death in 1994 brought much sorrow to the Mitchell family. How good that John could rely on the love of his children Liz and Mitch and on the support of the Tomales community.

Since his earliest years, John has been part of Tomales Presbyterian Church; as an adult he was active as trustee and elder, and any area

where his help was needed. Each fall, John loved going to the County Fairs in Petaluma, Sebastopol, and Santa Rosa; he enjoyed reading his newspaper at the end of the day; he loved rides through the country side and walks along the beach; and he cherished his years as a docent for the Tomales History Center.



John celebrated his 86<sup>th</sup> birthday at home, cheered on by his children Liz and Mitch, dear friends, and caregivers from Hospice. In spite of his frail health, John likes to have visitors and reminisce about the town he loves and the families and stories he has known all his life. God bless you, John, with continued good care, with love and kindness, and with some joy to brighten each day.

Congratulations to Two Rock member **Olga Pallo** who turned 90 on August 13.

Olga was born in Petaluma in 1928, the youngest of Carolina and Dominico Bordessa's eight children. She was raised on the family ranch in Two Rock, and as a child spoke some Italian at home. Olga attended the local elementary school, walking across the fields to the old school house that is located across the Two Rock Coast Guard Station. She also attended Two Rock Church with her family. After sixth grade, Olga went to Junior High School and then to High School in Petaluma. She graduated in 1947.

In High School, Olga met Ray Pallo; the two courted, and then were married in 1948. The couple moved to Cotati, where the first four of their children were born. After eight years, Olga, Ray and their children moved back to the family ranch in Two Rock, so that Olga could take care of her father. Seventeen years later, in the early 1970's, Olga and Ray purchased their house on Seavey Road, where Olga resides to this day. Olga and Ray were married for 66 years and six months, until Ray passed away in 2014. Olga and Ray have seven children, two boys and five girls; all their names start with the letter "D". There also are fifteen grandchildren and lots of great-grandchildren. Olga was always a home maker and caretaker of her family; but she also worked outside the home since she was a teenager, doing housework for other families in the area. Decades later, Olga is still stepping up to clean the kitchen after worship on Sundays, bake for Tuesday's Creative Crafts Group, and do dishes during Abelskiver Fundraiser and Harvest Festival. For fun, Olga sews, does embroidery, and spends time gardening and harvesting fruits and vegetables — all of which she gladly shares with others. Thank you for your kind heart, Olga!



On August 14, Olga's daughter-in-law Wendy and son Dan hosted a lovely luncheon in honor of Olga's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Everyone from the Creative Crafts Group plus several other friends and neighbors helped Olga celebrate. We had sandwiches, cake and ice cream, sang "Happy Birthday", and gave thanks for Olga's life among us! May God continue to bless you, Olga, in the coming months and years.

## ***WORSHIP***

**On September 2**, Labor Day weekend and Tomales Founders' Day, our two congregations will have **one joint worship in Tomales Church at 10:00 am**. The service will feature Gary Foster and his Jazz Band, who will play New Orleans style music and will have us sing along to hymns like "When the Saints Go Marching In", "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot", or "Just a Closer Walk With Thee". After worship, everyone is invited to enjoy the town parade, check out the booths in the town park, and spend time with family and friends as summer winds down.

After Labor Day weekend,  
**It's time for our annual change  
of worship times!**

Beginning on Sunday,  
**September 9**,  
We will worship  
**In Two Rock at 9:30 am**  
**In Tomales at 11:00 am**  
Until September 2019

**Here are some worship highlights  
for September and October:**

- † **Sermon series** on *The Letter of James: A Faith that Works!* on September 9, 16, 23, and 30
- † **World Communion Sunday** on October 7
- † **Stewardship focus** on October 14, 21, and 28

† **All Saints Sunday** on November 4, with worship in our sanctuaries and cemeteries

## **Marvelous & Magnificent Music:**

♪ Now that the Two Rock congregation worships at 9:30 am, **choir practice** will be at 11:00 am on Sunday mornings, after worship and time for coffee. In Tomales, choir practice will be held before worship, starting at 10:30 am.

♪ The **hand bell choir** has begun its rehearsals under the direction of Kay Fish. The group of ten players will ring during worship in Tomales on September 9 and in Two Rock on September 16. What joy!

♪ Over the summer, the Two Rock congregation purchased three octaves of **Melody Chimes**. The hand bell choir is now ringing the chimes alongside the bells, and we will be able to hear them during the bell choir's performances in September. Kay also wants to teach our Sunday school children how to ring Melody Chimes; what a great opportunity for our youth.

♪ Several individuals and groups continue to take turns providing the **introit in Two Rock**: Kyle Craft, Margaret Todt, the Men's Choir, and the Worship Ensemble led by David Coe. We are grateful for this wide variety of music.

**A big thank-you to all our musicians** for their faithful and heart-felt contributions to our worship. Your singing and playing to the glory of God sure lift our hearts and our spirits!

## ***EDUCATION & LEARNING***

☺ At the Sonoma-Marin County Fair in Petaluma, **Mary Briggs** of Two Rock won first prize in Rabbit Showmanship; at the Sonoma County Fair in Santa Rosa, she won

Best of Breed and Best Opposite of Breed for her Dutch rabbits. Congratulations, Mary, on these accomplishments! Well done!



© Here is some exciting news for all families in Tomales, Two Rock and surrounding villages: **Scouting is coming to our area** through the enthusiasm and effort of Tomales Church member Tim Graves.

When Tim grew up Moraga in the East Bay, scouting was part of his life: he was a Tiger Cub as a preschooler, a Lion of Light in Kindergarten, a Cub Scout in grades 1-5, and then a Scout between the ages of 11–17. Tim's whole family was involved in scouting; he loved every part of it; and already at the age of 14, he earned the rank of Eagle Scout!

Tim likes to point out that scouting provides an environment where children can learn important life skills and life values, and can do so in settings that are supportive and safe. Through hiking and camping, excursions with their pack and their den, and time spent with other children and trusted adults, scouts learn from a young age to be self-reliant and to collaborate with others, to be independent and to ask for help when needed, to make ethical choices and to grow in character. These values are expressed well in the **Scout Law**:

*A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.*

While scouting was a formative experience for Tim throughout his youth, the character traits he acquired and the experiences he gained will stay with him for the rest of his life. Now an adult, husband to Amanda, and father of three children, Tim realizes how he continues to value the Scout Law and how he actually looks for the character traits of a scout in others, in friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Because scouting continues to be so important to him, Tim wants to offer that to the next generation, so that they may reap the same opportunities and benefits that he received.

So here is what is happening: Thanks to Tim's leadership, **Pack 123** was chartered over the summer under the auspices of Tomales Presbyterian Church. The pack's name is a reference to the geographic coordinates of Tomales and Dillon Beach (38.2463° N, 122.9056° W; just about 123° W). Church Elder Eric Knudsen, himself an Eagle Scout, is the liaison between scouts and church. Pack 123 meets the third Thursday of every month at Tomales Presbyterian Church; the first gathering was held on August 16. Each pack has smaller Dens of about 5 children who are all in the same age group; dens also meet monthly. So children may attend two scout meetings a month.

Scouting is a family affair that involves mothers and fathers as volunteers, assistants, and den leaders. And because of a recent **change in policy at Scouts BSA**, it is now open to all genders, so that girls and boys in a family can do scouting together. Pack 123 is for children who will be 4 years old this fall through youth in grade 5, and is open to kids from Tomales, Dillon Beach, Two Rock, Valley Ford,

Bodega, Salmon Creek, Marshall and other nearby hamlets.

Each month, the activities of the pack and den meetings will vary: camp-outs are planned for September and February; there are hikes, and a pinewood derby; and for **Founders Day in Tomales, Pack 123 will be part of the color guard** — they have been practicing in the church sanctuary how to handle the flag of the USA.

For more information about Scouts BSA and Pack 123, please contact Tim Graves at 707-992-5019 or at [notsogravest@gmail.com](mailto:notsogravest@gmail.com).



© Be sure to bring your children and grandchildren to church on **September 9 for our back-to-school celebration**. That will be the day when we pray for the well-being of our children and youth this next school year, and when we honor our Sunday School teachers.

## **MISSION & OUTREACH**

On August 14, lots of **school supplies** were delivered to **Two Rock Elementary School** and **Tomales Elementary School**, supplies that had been collected by our congregations over the summer: paper, binder paper, writing pads, pencils, crayons, colored markers, binders, glue, tape, scissors, index cards, craft-making items, etc. In addition, the **Presbyterian Women of Two Rock** gave a check of \$ 100 to the Two Rock school office to purchase extra school supplies. Our gifts were greeted with big smiles and great appreciation.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this collection!

**The 72<sup>nd</sup> Two Rock Harvest Festival** is coming on **Saturday, September 22**. From **10:00 am until 3:00 pm**, we will have quilts and crafts for sale; offer cookies, pies, breads and canned goods; sell tickets for our Raffle; display Silent Auction items; sell fresh local produce, flowers and plants; and of course have our delicious BBQ chicken lunch with homemade potato salad, fresh sliced tomatoes, cooked beans, dessert, and coffee. Some children from our community will bring animals that they are raising for 4 H; Kyle Craft will play his violin; and lots of friends of Two Rock Church will come by to visit. Please join us for this joyous community event and big church fundraiser!



Do mark your calendars for the end of October: **Two Rock Church** will host its annual **Trunk-or-Treat on October 30 at 6:30** in the church parking lot. The following day, **Tomales Church** will hand out sweet treats to elementary school children on their **costumed parade** through Tomales. Please join us for these happy community gatherings!

## ***PROPERTY & FINANCE***

Many thanks to the Knudsen family: in July, they repaired a portion of the **wall in the narthex of Tomales Church**. They spackled the damaged section and carefully matched the existing paint; now the narthex is good as

new, and welcoming and inviting!

We have a heavy, fire-proof **file cabinet in the church office in Two Rock**. At the beginning of August, the lever that opens the top drawer broke, and we were unable to access files in that drawer. Two Rock member Rich Casarotti came to the rescue: he took out the next drawer down, disassembled it to see how the mechanism works, then was able to open and repair the top drawer. Thank you, Rich! In the process, lots of files were moved, reviewed, and re-sorted; all is well.

In March, the session of Two Rock Church engaged **Kerry Mahoney Davison as its property manager for the church manse**. Now that the house has been renovated, Kerry has listed the manse for rent. She will seek out suitable tenants and continue to act as property manager on behalf of the Two Rock congregation.

The last three Sundays in October will focus on **stewardship**. Join us on **October 14, 21 and 28** as we discern how to use our gifts of time, talents, and tithing to show forth the love of Christ and to serve our congregations and communities. And may each of us consider prayerfully how we want to support the mission and ministry of our church in 2019.

## ***PRESBYTERY NEWS***

†The next **Presbytery Meeting** will be held at Arcata Presbyterian Church on Saturday, September 15, 2018, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

†The fifth annual **Pedal for Protein** event will happen from September 16 through 21 in Humboldt County, giving cyclists six days to explore some stunning coastal redwoods. There will also be a one-

day ride in Santa Rosa on Saturday, September 29; **Tomales elder Mary Spragens**, a full-time high school teacher, is training to ride on that day. On August 5, Mary and ride organizer Patti Sanders hosted a **P 4 P fundraising event** in Tomales, which raised \$ 550 through sales of fair trade products and \$ 235 in donations, for a total of \$785. On August 26, Mary spoke about P 4 P to the Two Rock congregation, which had been collecting donations for the event in specially marked jars. All funds raised by P 4 P will be given to food pantries within our Presbytery of the Redwoods, so that more protein-rich foods can be purchased and offered to clients. Thank you to all who are supporting this important, Presbytery-wide mission project!

## ***COMMUNITY NEWS***

**Tomales Regional History Center** will celebrate its **40<sup>th</sup> anniversary** on **Saturday, October 6, from 2 to 5 pm**. The event will be held at Tomales Town Hall, and the theme is “Celebrate for History”. Tickets for this fundraiser are \$ 45 per person. There will be finger food, wine and beer, a door prize, a raffle for gift baskets, plus a presentation in pictures of the history center’s development from its beginnings in 1978 to the present.

**The annual Tomales Flu Shot Clinic** is scheduled at the Town Hall for Tuesday, **October 30, from 1 pm to 4 pm**. We are grateful that Ellen Christiansen, Assistant Professor at the School of Nursing at Dominican University in San Rafael, will again bring her nursing students to administer the flu shots. This event is free and open to all! Come get your flu shot, and help keep our community healthy as the flu season approaches.

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“ As long as the earth endures, cold and heat, summer and winter,  
day and night, shall not cease” (Genesis 8:22)

**Joint Worship in Tomales: Sunday September 2nd**

*Worship at 10:00am – Jazz Band*

*Parade at noon – Food & Activities in the Park*

**Change of Worship Time: Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>: Two Rock at 9:30 & Tomales at 11:00**

**Two Rock 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Harvest Festival: Saturday September 22<sup>nd</sup>**

*10:00am -3:00pm: Crafts, cakes, quilts, produce, treasures and raffle*

*Chicken BBQ served from 11:30am – 2:30pm*

**Two Rock Trunk-or-Treat, Tuesday October 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm**